

IV. IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A gutter hanger apparatus for engagement between the front portion and rear portion of a rain gutter having a generally U-shaped transverse cross-sectional shape and for additional engagement with a roof-supported cover extending toward said rain gutter, comprising:

a one-piece rain gutter support structure having first and second opposed ends, a top edge portion and a bottom edge portion extending between said first and second opposed ends ~~first and second opposed ends~~, and a middle portion located on said top edge portion between said first and second ends and extending upward with respect to said top edge portion and forward with respect to said first end of said one-piece support structure,

a first gutter engagement portion which extends forward and upward from said first end of said one-piece support structure for engaging the front portion of said rain gutter,

a gutter cover engagement portion attached to the distal end of said middle portion ~~which extends forward and upward from said middle portion~~ of said support structure for engaging the roof-supported cover, wherein said gutter cover engagement portion is located at an elevated position relative to said gutter engagement portion and between said first and second opposed ends of said one-piece rain gutter support structure, and

a second gutter engagement portion, said second gutter engagement portion comprising a support-fastener-reception portion which extends upward from said second end of said one-piece support structure for engaging the rear portion of the rain gutter, and

wherein said middle portion located on said top edge portion between said first and second ends and extending upward with respect to said top edge portion and forward with respect to said first end of said one-piece support structure further includes a concave top surface, said concave top surface extending toward said second end and commonly joining said middle portion and said second gutter engagement portion extending upwardly from said second end of said one-piece support structure.

2. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said support-fastener-reception portion includes a fastener-reception channel which extends downwardly and rearwardly obliquely with respect to said second end of said one-piece support structure.

3. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said support-fastener-reception portion extends upwardly and rearwardly obliquely with respect to said top edge portion of said one-piece support structure.

4. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein:

said first gutter engagement portion extends above said bottom portion of said one-piece support structure by a first height, said gutter cover engagement portion extends above said bottom portion of said one-piece support structure by a second height, and

said second height is greater than said first height.

5. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said ~~first~~ gutter cover engagement portion includes a convex end portion.

6. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said first gutter engagement portion includes an L-shaped gutter engagement end portion.

7. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said one-piece support structure includes reinforcement means for reinforcing said first gutter engagement portion and said gutter cover engagement portion.

8. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, further including a cover having a first edge and an opposed second edge, said first edge being adapted to engage said gutter cover engagement portion and be supported thereby.

9. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 8 wherein said first edge of said cover is complementary in shape to said gutter cover engagement end portion.

10. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 9 wherein said first edge of said cover is concave and said gutter cover engagement portion is convex to permit said cover first edge to be snap-fitted on said cover engagement convex end portion.

11. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 7 wherein said reinforcement means comprise at least one transverse rib member extending obliquely between said bottom portion of said one-piece support structure and said gutter cover engagement portion.

12. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 7 wherein said reinforcement means comprise a plurality of transverse rib members extending obliquely between said bottom edge portion and said top edge portion of said one-piece support structure.

13. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 12 wherein said plurality of reinforcement means comprises at least one of said transverse rib members extending at a first angle between said bottom edge portion and said top edge portion of said one-piece support structure and at least one

other transverse rib member extending at a second angle between said bottom portion and said top portion of said one-piece support structure.

14. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 7 wherein said reinforcement means comprises a central transverse web member extending obliquely from said bottom edge portion of said one-piece support structure through said at least said gutter cover engagement portion.

15. Canceled.

16. Canceled.

17. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim ~~16~~ 1 wherein said support-fastener-reception portion extending upwardly and rearwardly obliquely with respect to said top edge portion of said one-piece support structure forms a portion of said concave top surface.

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